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## **News Release**

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### **Bloomington man sentenced to 72 months for bank fraud**

A 48-year-old Bloomington man was sentenced yesterday to 72 months in federal prison for his role in a bank fraud scheme. United States District Chief Judge James Rosenbaum also sentenced Mark Julian Lee to five years of supervised release.

Although the federal sentencing guidelines suggested a sentence of 24-30 months imprisonment, Rosenbaum elected to sentence Lee to 72 months, with the federal term to run consecutive to a sentence Lee is already serving in state custody. In granting the government's motion for an increased sentence based upon Lee's extensive criminal history, Rosenbaum noted that his criminal history was "far and away the worst I've ever seen in my 23 years as a judge."

According to Lee's plea agreement, he did knowingly and willfully conspire with a second defendant to execute and attempt to execute a scheme to obtain money from several financial institutions by means of materially false and fraudulent pretenses. The second defendant, Stephanie Alane Prescott, 47, Bloomington, pleaded guilty on Jan. 14 to one count of conspiracy to commit bank fraud and is awaiting sentencing.

In furtherance of the conspiracy, Lee stole mail, or received from others mail that he knew to be stolen, which contained checks. Lee altered the checks to make them appear payable to a co-conspirator, who endorsed the altered checks, and cashed them in order to receive money. The conspiracy occurred from Aug. 22, 2005, to Sept. 30, 2006.

This case was the result of an investigation by the United States Postal Inspection Service, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney William J. Otteson.